Danenberg Oberlin-in-London Program
Spring 2012
Literature, Theater, and Politics in Britain
Information for Prospective Students

About the Program

Oberlin’s London Program is a life-changing experience: a chance to study with a small group of motivated students and stimulating faculty, in an exciting city, in the presence of great museums, music, theater, history, and a thriving and diverse culture.

Unlike most study-away programs, the Danenberg Oberlin-in-London Program offers students the opportunity to study abroad with professors from our own campus in one of the world’s most exciting, diverse locations. It combines the thrill of living in a vibrant international metropolis with the rigors of first-rate education. The curriculum makes intensive use of all that London has to offer. Classes are designed to plunge into the city—much learning takes place outside the classroom. Courses are both disciplinary and interdisciplinary.

Moreover, the program offers an intimate intellectual environment. This year there will be two separate curricular programs for the 25 students, who will apply to study either with Professor Blecher or with Professor Walker—see below for details. All students will also take a course on the History of London.

Students on the program are registered at Oberlin College, and their courses are Oberlin College courses, so there is no need to transfer credits, and your financial aid travels with you. Moreover, the Financial Aid Office adjusts aid packages to take account of those living costs—mainly housing—that are higher in London.

Oberlin’s London Program has profoundly changed many students’ and faculty members’ lives forever. Those of you who come along are in for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

• Marc Blecher, Professor of Politics, 2012 Oberlin-in-London Faculty
• David Walker, Professor of English, 2012 Oberlin-in-London Faculty
• Donna Vinter, Resident Director, Oberlin-in-London Program
• Ellen Sayles, Associate Dean and Director of International Studies
• Nicholas Jones, Professor of English and Chair, Danenberg Oberlin-in-London Committee
About the faculty

Marc Blecher, Politics

London has become my second home, thanks to the opportunities I've had to teach on the London Program in 1993, 1998, and 2003. So I can't wait to turn a new group of Obies on to my favorite city. All its thrilling cosmopolitan sophistication aside, London has also profoundly shaped my work as a social scientist and citizen, offering fresh perspectives on politics, society, economics, and international affairs that provide invaluable antidotes to many conventional American nostrums. My research specialty is Chinese politics (focusing especially on workers), but my teaching spans wider questions of class power and inequalities. London is, for me, a natural setting to explore those issues, since so many Brits actually still think and talk about them.

David Walker, English

This will be my sixth time teaching on the London Program, and I’m excited about the chance to introduce another group of Oberlin students to a city I know well and love. My teaching interests center on twentieth-century literature, drama, and creative writing. In Oberlin I regularly offer courses on modernist fiction, Shakespeare, contemporary poetry and drama, and playwriting. I also have considerable experience with theater as an actor, director, and frequent playgoer, including leading groups of Oberlin alums on London theater study tours every other summer for the last 15 years. The first time I taught on the London Program, I felt as though it was the sort of teaching I was born to do, and I’m no less passionate about it now.

Marc Blecher and David Walker have co-taught the Oberlin-in-London program with great success three times previous to this 2012 program.

The History of London course will be taught by Resident Faculty member Katy Layton-Jones.

The Curriculum

Each student will enroll either in the Politics Program or the English Program. These are not transfer courses, but regular Oberlin College courses for which students register (by consent) as usual, and for which titles and grades will appear on the Oberlin transcript.

Politics Program (Prof. Blecher): 12 credits in Politics, 2 credits in History

Class, Gender, Race and Politics in Britain and the US. Mr. Blecher. POLT 911. 6 credits. 6SS. Class is a fundamental social cleavage, but it is more invisible than gender, race or ethnicity, especially to Americans, given our history and ideology. In this seminar, we use London as a
living laboratory to study class in relation to the economy and politics. We also explore class’s intersections with gender and with race and ethnicity. Readings begin with theory but move quickly to substantive studies of both the UK and, for comparison, the US.

Research Workshop: Class and Politics in Britain. Mr. Blecher. POLT 912. 6 credits. 6SS, WR. Students will conduct field research, such as interviews, participant observation, and site visits, related to the themes of Politics 911, focusing on an arena of London or British life of interest. Frequent consultations will help with research arrangements. Students will present project proposals and successive drafts to the class. We will publish a bound volume of the papers (see Blecher, ed., Class and Politics in Britain [OC Library HN400.S6 C53 1998], by the 1998 London students; and Class and Politics in Britain [Oberlin: Oberlin Politics Department, 2004]).

The History of London. London faculty TBA. HIST 950. 2SS. This course explores the history of London from its Roman origins to the present day and examines how royalty, trade, religion, and transport have shaped the city’s pattern of growth over 2000 years.

English Program (Prof. Walker): 12 credits in English, 2 credits in History

The London Stage. Mr. Walker. ENGL 966. 6 credits. 6HU, WR. An exploration of English and European drama from the Renaissance to the present, emphasizing the relation between drama as literature and as a script for theatrical realization. The syllabus will be based on plays being produced in London and Stratford; on the average, we will read and discuss two plays a week, which will then be seen in performance. We will explore varieties of theatrical style and practice, from the epic scale of the Royal Shakespeare Company and the National Theatre to small fringe theaters like the Gate and the Bush. An important aspect of the course will be a performance laboratory, for which students will prepare and perform scenes for analysis. The course will be conducted largely by discussion with the instructor and with actors, directors, and other guests involved in theater.

Modernism in England. Mr. Walker. ENGL 972. 6 credits. 6HU. A study of the modern aesthetic as practiced in England during the first half of the twentieth century, emphasizing both thematic and stylistic developments, and focusing as much as possible on works reflecting life in London. Our primary attention will be literary; the syllabus will depend on the interests of students selected for the program, but is likely to include poetry by Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot, stories by Katherine Mansfield and D. H. Lawrence, and such novels as Joseph Conrad’s The Secret Agent, E. M. Forster’s Howards End, Virginia Woolf’s Mrs Dalloway, and Graham Greene’s The Ministry of Fear. Literary study will be complemented by attention to the art, architecture, music, and dance of the period, and to the history and ideas that underlie them, insofar as the knowledge and interests of members of the group allow. Visits to museums, concerts, opera and dance performances, and architectural sites will be integrated with our reading.

The History of London. Katy Layton-Jones. HIST 950. 2SS. This course explores the history of London from its Roman origins to the present day and examines how royalty, trade, religion, and transport have shaped the city’s pattern of growth over 2000 years.

Oberlin-in-London Program Site

The Danenberg Oberlin-in-London Program is located in the Bloomsbury neighborhood of London, on a street whose most famous and prestigious building is no less than the British
Museum. Thus, we are just down the street from the Rosetta Stone, the Parthenon Marbles, the Benin bronzes, treasures of ancient Egypt, and much more. Bloomsbury is also a central location for the University of London, so the neighborhood has a student feel.

The London Program leases space from the Florida State University London Study Centre, at 99-103 Great Russell Street. We have a program office and use of a classroom. Students also have the use of the small Study Centre library, two computer labs (open 24 hours a day), a small student lounge, and a quiet study area.

The FSU London Study Centre also leases space to the study abroad programs of several other American colleges and universities, including at present Grinnell College, Drew University, Colgate University, the University of Iowa Law Program, and SUNY Binghamton.

The building is open to students and monitored by security staff 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Students will receive a swipe card, with a photo ID, which will provide access to the building. The website for the Florida State University London Study Centre is http://www.fsu.edu/~london.

Costs

Students on the Oberlin-in-London Program are billed for Oberlin tuition and fees just as they would be if enrolled on campus. They are not billed for room and board. A $500 non-refundable deposit is required upon admission to the program to be allowed to register in the program; it will be applied to tuition for the semester.

Tuition and fees cover costs in the following categories:

- Admission costs, theater ticket costs, etc. for curricular activities, when students are enrolled in the relevant course; transportation costs when such trips involve out-of-London travel; and accommodation costs if overnight stays are included. Note: meals are not paid for by the program.
- Similar subsidies for certain co-curricular activities that may be planned.
- Membership in the International Students House.

Students are responsible for the following additional costs (estimates only):

- Transportation to and from London (upwards of $800)
- Housing in London (about £182/week – currently about $288)
- Meals
- Transportation in London
- Other expenses as course books, personal travel, and personal items

Financial Aid

Once students confirm their participation in the London Program, the financial aid office will adjust the financial aid award package to take account of the higher housing costs in London and the fact that work-study is not available there. Students receiving financial aid from the College should ensure that they have signed all forms and made arrangements for
disbursement prior to leaving the country. N.B: There is no early disbursement of financial aid available.

Student Housing

Students live in groups of between 3 and 8 in self-contained apartments (“flats”), usually centrally located, within easy reach of our headquarters.

Oberlin has a long-standing working relationship with Euracom, a provider of pre-arranged flats for American students in London. The flats are central, safe, secure, and reasonably well equipped. Utilities are included, so there are no extra costs apart from an end-of-tenancy cleaning charge. There is a property manager to deal with maintenance and emergencies. **We strongly believe that prearranging for housing through Euracom is the best option for most students**, and we have worked out an easy system for doing so. This system will allow you to be billed for housing through your spring term bill.

More information about Euracom and other housing options will be available after acceptance to the program.

What students say about the program

“I would emphasize what a life-changing experience it has been to combine a small class with in and out of class learning in one of the best cities in the world. . . . Many of my friends say they remember travelling, or drinking in pubs, when recounting their experiences studying abroad in other programs. But I feel the Oberlin-in-London program has allowed me a great educational experience and provided me with two mentors.”

“This is a wonderful opportunity to experience the excitement of travel and city life while maintaining a close relationship with the familiarity of Oberlin. Not only do you become closer with your fellow Obies, but you also develop a sense of responsibility and maturity that only comes by taking care of yourself in a big city.

“The program really is serious about using London as a way to teach the courses here. We went on many trips and attended lectures and went on some great history walks. London offers something for everyone.”

“You can literally find anything here – there is theater, history, multicultural activities, activism, intellectualism. . . . I have had the freedom to explore yet classes to give me grounding and depth. I would highly recommend London as a city for any student to spend a semester.”

“Even though we were miles away from home, we were with friends and other familiar faces, we already spoke the language, our classes were intellectually engaging and fun, our financial aid checks did not get lost in the mail, and we only occasionally ran out of toilet paper. . . . Even though there were days when I missed my family and friends so much that it hurt, days when I thought that another rainy day would drive me up the wall, I would not trade my experience for the world.”
Calendar

| Week of 23 January | Recommended date for flying to London for students without prearranged housing.  
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| Tuesday, 31 January - to arrive Wednesday, 1 February | Recommended date for flying (overnight) to London for students with pre-arranged housing through Euracom.  
| Students who have chosen to find their own flats should plan to arrive earlier (see above). |
| Friday, 3 February - Sunday, 5 February | Orientation |
| Monday, 6 February | Classes begin |
| Saturday, 17 March - Sunday, 25 March | Spring Break |
| Thursday, 3 May | Last day of classes |
| Monday, 7 May | Program ends -- recommended departure date. Note: in booking return flights, you should bear in mind that you will need to allow time after the completion of the semester to clean your flat thoroughly. It is recommended that you plan to leave London on this day (when pre-arranged housing contracts will end). |

Student Regulations

Students on the Oberlin-in-London Program are expected to follow all academic and student conduct policies as outlined in the Oberlin College Course Catalog and the Student Regulations, Policies and Procedures, available at www.oberlin.edu/students/links-life/rules-reg.html.

Life in London will demand responsibility and maturity and the London Program Committee has accordingly adopted the following statement:

“Behavior which, in the judgment of the London Program Director and faculty, substantially impedes the educational experiences of that student or other program participants may result in the removal of the student from the program. In such instances and where appropriate, reasonable efforts will be made to enable the student to complete the semester on the Oberlin campus.”